

Questions for Parents

Parents are the most passionate voices for children's mental health. They live with it every day and have first-hand experience. Parents can 'paint the picture' and make their stories come alive for the candidates. That is what candidates will remember.

Members have asked us for questions for parents to use when they attend meetings with candidates. We worked with Susan Hess from the Parents for Children's Mental Health and members of the CMHO Election Committee to develop the following questions.

Please make copies of these questions and put them in your waiting rooms. You might also give these questions to parents who attend meetings with you.

We hope you will find them useful. If you have used other questions, please share them with us.

ISSUE: WAITING FOR SERVICES

IF YOUR CHILD IS CURRENTLY ON A WAITING LIST FOR SERVICE, YOU MAY WANT TO ASK THIS QUESTION

My child has been waiting to get children's mental health services for _____
(weeks/months).

Describe what is happening to him/her and your family while you are waiting for help.

ASK THIS QUESTION

What are you going to do for my child and other kids in this community who are waiting for service?

ISSUE: STAFF TURNOVER

IF YOUR CHILD HAS HAD A CHANGE IN WORKER, YOU MAY WANT TO SAY:
I finally started getting service for my child after _____ (weeks/months) and _____
(weeks/months) into treatment, my worker left. We are now back at square one. My child needs consistent, ongoing help to get the best results possible. If all the workers are leaving for higher paying jobs somewhere else, where does that leave my child?

ASK THIS QUESTION

What are you going to do to make sure that workers don't leave _____ (name of agency)
to go to the Board of Education of a health care provider because they pay more?

ISSUE: DIRECT FUNDING FOR SERVICES TO CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILIES

_____ (name of agency) cannot provide the right services at the right time to the children and families in our community who need them. Money invested in research has value but not at a cost of providing direct services to children with mental health problems and their families.

ASK THIS QUESTION

Where do you stand on investment in direct services for children's mental health in community agencies?

ISSUE: KEEPING THE NEED FOR CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES TOP OF MIND AMONG POLITICIANS

Adults with mental health problems are getting lots of attention by politicians, government and media. Children with mental health problems and their families have been forgotten by politicians.

Service is not available when they need it the most. We know that if we can get treatment for our children earlier, they and the communities they live in, will be healthier and safer.

ASK THIS QUESTION

What will you do to make sure children's mental health services gets, and stays, on the government's agenda?